

# LAKESHORE PARK

## SKATE PLAZA

### CASE STUDY



**JANUARY 2007**

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## HISTORY OF THE SKATE PLAZA PROJECT

During the past several years the City Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department has experienced problems with skateboarders at several public park areas including Phoenix Park and the Hank Aaron Plaza in Carson Park.

The Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department desires to encourage people to skateboard, roller blade and trick bike, but in safe and appropriate places. The YMCA has an excellent facility for skateboarding, but there are issues with that facility:

1. There is an admission cost. This is not unusual, and it is not a problem when a boarder has an entire day to spend at the park to get his or her money's worth so to speak. It is a problem when you only have a short time available to skate – such as before or after school. We believe the YMCA admission fee is reasonable and a good value for those who can get to the site and for those that can stay for expanded periods of time. For skaters that desire to skate for short periods of time, a free rink would be appropriate.
2. There is only one skateboard facility in the entire city. This is not unusual and is not a problem when you have an entire day to spend at the facility. Transportation to the YMCA facility is a problem when you have limited time. Having an alternative site for boarders would be accomplished by having a site at Lakeshore Park.
3. The YMCA facility is not open year round. The facility is generally open from April to November. Experience in La Crosse, Middleton and Menomonie skateparks show that kids will bring snow shovels to skateboard facilities and skate all year round.

In order to address the issues above, the Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department proposes to install a 3,000 square foot facility (about the size of a tennis court) in Lakeshore Park. The facility would be a “city plaza theme.” The facility would be concrete and would contain amenities that can be found in many community street landscapes – curbs, steps, hand railings and benches.

On April 26, 2006 the City Waterways and Parks Commission was asked to entertain the idea of installing a 2,000 (50'x40') square foot concrete plaza at Lakeshore Playground. The Commission accepted the concept voted to recommend building a larger, 3,000 (50'x70') square foot facility. The skateboard enthusiasts went back to the drawing board and designed a larger facility and estimated costs. Excerpts from the meeting minutes:

**Consideration of Request to Provide a Skateboard Area in a City Park.** Phil informed the Commission that the City had received a request to consider installing a skateboard area in one of the City parks to provide another skateboard facility in addition to the YMCA skate park. The City's parks have experienced considerable damage from skateboarders using railings, steps, planters, etc. that have not been designed for such use. Phil noted that his staff has looked at potential sites to build a test site to determine if the skateboarders would use the facility and stop use where not permitted.

After looking at a number of sites, Lakeshore Playground was suggested. An area south of the shelter building is available where the skating rink used to be located.

Phil reviewed a concept sketch of the playground outlining a 40' by 50' area for skateboarders and also a bocce ball area that has been requested by the neighborhood. The skateboard area would consist of a concrete slab with curbs, steps and possibly a small ramp area. It would not be as extensive as the facilities provided by the YMCA. Phil stated that the Historic Randall Park Neighborhood Association has reviewed the proposal and has indicated their support for the plan.

The Commission discussed the proposal and Ray Hughes suggested rather than locating it at a playground site; that a site such as the parking lot at Hobb's Ice Area should be considered. He also suggested that several of these facilities should be dispersed throughout the City to make them more accessible. Ray added that the Eau Claire School District should be involved with this issue as many skateboarders use School District facilities, plus their sites would be logical locations for small skateboard areas.

Sue Kaul noted that she felt that the proposed size for the skateboard area seemed too small.

Oscar Brandser stated that he felt that developing such a facility would be a duplication of services already provided by the YMCA.

Anthony Lokken, spoke in support of the proposal. Mr. Lokken stated that he owned a skateboard shop and indicated that skateboard facilities in addition to the one at the YMCA are needed. The proposed site would be a good test to determine if it would be used by the Eau Claire skateboard community.

Marty Fisher Blakeley, President of the Historic Randall Park Neighborhood Association, spoke in support. Mrs. Blakeley stated that the Neighborhood Association supports the idea, as the playground is currently underutilized. The proposed location within the playground would be good as it is fairly isolated from any nearby homes.

Richard John Janecke, spoke in support. Mr. Janecke stated that the community needs a free skateboard facility. The facility at the YMCA requires a fee, which many skateboarders find difficult to pay for each time they want to go skateboarding.

Andrew Stephen, spoke in support noting that younger skateboarders primarily use the facility at the YMCA and there is a need for a facility for older skateboarders.

Andrew Gary, spoke in support and added that this proposal would help keep skateboarders out of prohibited areas.

Sue Lokken, spoke in support.

Judy Mosley, spoke in support. Mrs. Mosley stated that skateboarding is a good physical activity and should be encouraged. She added that the YMCA facility has limited hours of operation.

Sheila Kircoff, spoke in support.

Chris Wagner, President of the UWEC Student Senate, spoke in support of the proposal. Mr. Wagner stated that he had talked with a number of students from the University that are also in favor of the plan. He added that many of the outdoor facilities at the University have also been damaged from skateboard use.

**ACTION TAKEN:** Larry Gansluckner moved to recommend that the City support the concept of constructing a 50' by 70' skateboard area at Lakeshore Playground that incorporates the bocce ball courts as outlined and that School District officials be contacted and asked to assist with trying to resolve the issue. Bill Reabe seconded the motion. The motion carried with Jim Olson and Oscar Brandser voting no.

On September 27, 2006, the Waterways and Parks Commission examined a plan for a 3,000 square foot facility, estimated to cost approximately \$20,440. The Commission passed a recommendation to the City Council to approve the plan and begin fundraising for the project. Excerpts from the meeting minutes:

**E. Recommendation on Proposal to Fundraise for Skate Plaza.** Phil Fieber informed the Commission that a group of skateboard enthusiasts have developed a design for a 50' x 70' concrete skate plaza to be built at Lakeshore Playground. The Commission had previously discussed the idea and endorsed the concept, which is to be located at Lakeshore Playground. The plan is estimated to cost \$20,440 and would include six steps, a rail and a platform. The group is now interested in proceeding with fund raising efforts. If given the go-ahead, funds would be deposited with the Eau Claire Parks Association, until the fund raising is completed. At which time, the funds would be released to the City for construction.

Matt Gillecker, spoke in support of the skate plaza and fund raising efforts. Mr. Gillecker noted that if this site is successful, that the City should consider additional skate board sites.

Erin Hesler, spoke in support.

Cynthia White, spoke in support. Ms. White stated that kids interested in skate boarding need a place to go where skate boarding was permitted.

Richard John Jenicke, spoke in support. Mr. Jenicke asked if the City could provide financial support for the project.

The Commission discussed the issue and several members noted that it would be a good idea to offer a place such as this for skateboarders in order to provide an alternative to skate boarding in non-permitted areas. Children interested in this activity should have facilities available just as those interested in such activities as basketball, tennis, etc.

Jim Olson expressed concerns that the fundraising group was not an officially organized group and expressed concerns about the unsupervised nature of the proposed facility.

**ACTION TAKEN:** Ray Hughes moved to recommend approval of the efforts to fundraise for the skate plaza at Lakeshore Playground. Larry Gansluckner seconded the motion. The motion carried with Jim Olson and Steve Ludwig voting no.

On October 10, 2006 the City Council accepted the skateboard plan and approved a resolution allowing the group to begin fundraising for a skate plaza in Lakeshore Park. Excerpts from the meeting minutes:

## **MINUTES**

### **EAU CLAIRE CITY COUNCIL LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

**Tuesday, October 10, 2006**

**City Council Chamber**

**4:00 p.m.**

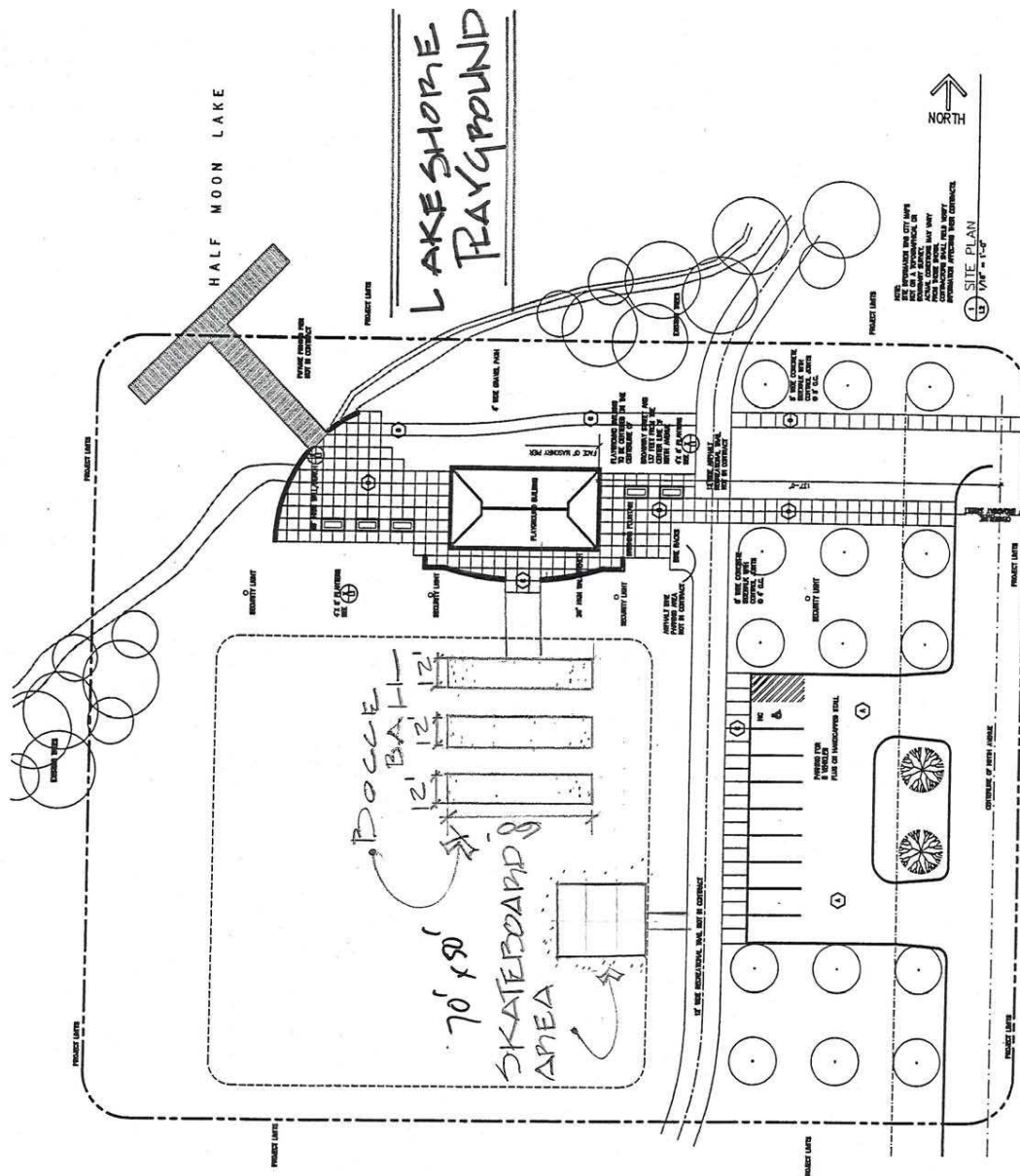
### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND ROLL CALL**

Council President Adler called the meeting to order. The following members were present: Council Members David Adler, Toby Biegel, Brandon Buchanan, Hal Davis, David Duax, Raymond Hughes, Kerry Kincaid, Terry Sheridan, Bob Von Haden and Thomas Vue. Absent: Council Member Berlye Middleton.

### **SKATEBOARD PLAZA**

The Council considered a resolution allowing the Skateboard Plaza Group to raise funds for the construction of a skateboard plaza at Lakeshore Park. Thereupon a motion was offered by Council Member Kincaid and seconded by Council Member Duax "to adopt said resolution". Said motion passed by unanimous vote.

# LAKESHORE SKATE PARK SITE PLAN



## LAKESORE PARK/ PLAYGROUND SKATE PLAZA SITE PHOTO





LEFT: Winner's Park in Chula Vista, Calif., is a concrete plaza style skate park. In parks that consist of a single bowl structure are becoming increasingly rare.

## CHULA VISTA, CA SKATE PLAZA AND MODEL FOR EAU CLAIRE LAKESHORE SKATE PARK PLAZA

## **SKATE PLAZA COST ESTIMATES**

<b>Platform at top of stairs 10' x 10'</b>	<b>\$440</b>
<b>Concrete 4" thick, 50' x 70' slab</b>	<b>\$15,400</b>
<b>Steps 6 risers, 5' wide, 10' total width</b>	<b>\$1,650</b>
<b>Landscape/topsoil 50 cubic yards/seed</b>	<b>\$770</b>
<b>Center Rail</b>	<b>\$330</b>
<b>Recognition Plaques</b>	<b>\$350</b>
<b>Contingency</b>	<b><u>\$1,500</u></b>
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>\$20,400</b>

## PROJECT TENTATIVE TIMELINE

Spring 2007	Begin Fundraising
Spring, Summer and Fall 2007	Fundraising
Spring 2008	Begin Construction
Summer 2008	Grand Opening Ceremony

## **PROPOSED SIGNAGE FOR THE SKATE PLAZA**

### **Welcome to the Eau Claire Lakeshore Park Skate Plaza Facility**

**This is Your Park – Please Take Care of It.  
Please Abide By The Following Rules:**

- HAVE FUN!! This Park Was Built For Your Safety And Enjoyment. Know Your Abilities And Stay Within Them While At The Park.
- This Park Is For Skateboarders, Inline Skaters, and BMX Bikes Only.
- Proper Use Of HELMETS, ELBOW AND WRIST PADS, AND KNEE PADS Are Recommended While Using This Facility. Skulls, Bones and Concrete Can Be A Harsh Reality.
- Skate/Bike At Your Own Risk. Skating And Biking Can Be Naturally Dangerous Activities. The City Assumes No Liability For Injuries Sustained In The Use Of This Facility.
- This Is A Tobacco, Drug, And Alcohol Free Recreation Area.
- Keep Your Language In Check – No Abusive Language Or Behavior. Be Respectful Of Other Skaters And Of Others Using The Adjacent Areas And Playgrounds.
- No Food, Drink, Or Glass Containers Allowed On The Skatepark Surface.
- Report Any Damaged Components Immediately To The Recreation Department.
- Damage, Graffiti, Or Vandalism May Result In Temporary Closure Of The Park.

For assistance, please call The Eau Claire Parks and Recreation staff  
at 839-5032 or email [www.ci.eau-claire.wi.us](http://www.ci.eau-claire.wi.us)

#### **Skatepark Facility Hours**

The Skatepark Is Open From Sunrise To Sunset

# **EXTREME SPORTS INDUSTRY, DEMOGRAPHICS, AND INJURY RATIO (Compiled by The Summers Group in 2002)**

## **Introduction**

"Extreme Sports", which include skateboarding, inline skating, BMX bike riding, snowboarding, motocross racing, etc., are the fastest growing sports in the United States.<sup>1</sup> Participation in skateboarding, in particular, has increased dramatically in recent years as evidenced by the popularity of the X-Games, Gravity Games, and skateboard-oriented TV shows. Due to its status as an emerging sport in the United States and abroad, there are conflicting statistics reported by various sources regarding participant numbers, retail sales, etc.

**The Summers Group** has researched Extreme Sports from a variety of sources and has summarized the data below. In some cases, the data is in conflict and is changing, due to the evolving nature of these sports.

## **Growth in the Sport**

- Explosion of interest in skateboarding due to ESPN's involvement in the X-Games.<sup>2</sup>
- The X-Games began in Rhode Island, 1994. The 2000 event was expected to draw an estimated 201,000 spectators with an economic windfall of approximately \$42 million.<sup>3</sup>
- A new culture of "being yourself" in your sport (i.e. no required uniforms, mastery of skills vs. winning).
- The industry will continue to gain momentum as the sport becomes more mainstream.

## **Growth in the Number of Parks** (public and private)

- In 1996, only 200 parks; in 2001, more than 1500 parks in the US.<sup>4</sup>
- In 1998, skateboarders lobbied successfully in CA for inclusion in Hazardous Recreational Activities List: # of parks doubled with decreased threats of liability/lawsuits against public entities.<sup>5</sup>
- In 1999, 300 parks built; in 2000, 600 parks built in the US.<sup>6</sup>
- Vans has 12 operating parks and is building 2 more.<sup>7</sup>
- Camp Woodward is expanding into northern California and has formed a strategic relationship with Disney.<sup>8</sup>

## **Growth in the Number of Participants**

- From 1999-2000 the number of skateboarders increased 49.2%.<sup>9</sup>
- At a time when the number of participants in traditional sports like baseball and basketball declined, skateboarders increased 35.8%.<sup>10</sup>
- Parks & Recreation department surveys show skateboarding is the #1 choice of teens.<sup>11</sup>
- 60 million kids in the US between the ages of 5-20 years old (born 1979-1994) – the biggest demographic bulge since the Baby Boom.<sup>12</sup>
- In 2001, 78% of the estimated 10 million skateboarders were 12-19 years old.<sup>13</sup>
- In 2002, the International Association of Skateboard Companies reports an estimated 16 million skateboarders.<sup>14</sup>
- The average skateboarder is 14 (7-16 range, with 85% under age 16), but the age of kids entering the action sports is getting younger and younger.<sup>15</sup>
- By 2004, a new wave of college student skateboarders will begin to hit universities.

### **Growth in Retail Sales**

- Extreme Sports (skateboarding, inline skating & freestyle bikes) are a \$3 billion/year industry.<sup>16</sup>
- Skateboarding is a \$1 billion/year industry (soft goods & hard goods). Soft goods have the most dramatic increase in sales (accessories, helmets, pads, backpacks, videos, etc.).<sup>17</sup>
- 300 manufacturers of skateboards and skateboard-related products generate \$1.4 billion in annual retail sales.<sup>18</sup>
- In 1994, \$20.6 million was generated in retail sales.<sup>19</sup>
- In 1999, \$69 million was generated in retail sales.<sup>20</sup>
- Currently, 100,000 skateboard decks are manufactured each month and 25,000 skateboard wheels are made every day.<sup>21</sup>
- With the projected growth rate continuing to draw more participants into the sport, skateboarding retail sales are expected to grow proportionally.
- The clothing and accessories that are part of the skateboarding culture appear to be as important to skateboarders as the sports gear itself.

### **Growth in Advertising**

- In March 12, 2001, "Skateboarding Magazine" reported a 23.7% increase in the number of ad pages for regular magazine issues.<sup>22</sup>
- "Skateboarding Magazine" reported a 30.8% increase in ad revenue (\$16.5 million) in 2000.<sup>23</sup>
- "Skateboarding Magazine" reports attracting mainstream advertisers like Ford Motor Company, in addition to skateboard-related advertisers.<sup>24</sup>
- www.Skateboarding.com reported 8.5 million hits/month on its web site.<sup>25</sup>
- The average www.Skateboarding.com user is a 15-year-old male with an annual household income of \$50,000 who skateboards every day.<sup>26</sup>

### **References: Footnotes**

<sup>1</sup>"Xtraordinary: Younger Generation taking Sports to Xtreme", Hartford Courant, 2/17/01.

<sup>2</sup>Michael Brooke, "The Concrete Wave: The History of Skateboarding".

<sup>3</sup>"Bristol Officials Ecstatic About ESPN's Game Plan", Hartford Courant.

<sup>4</sup>Skate Parks Association USA (SPAUSA).

<sup>5</sup>International Association of Skateboard Companies (IASC).

<sup>6</sup>SPAUSA.

<sup>7</sup>Business Wire, 2000.

<sup>8</sup>Business Wire, 2000.

<sup>9</sup>[www.Board-trac.com](http://www.Board-trac.com).

<sup>10</sup>National Sporting Goods Association, as reported in American City Business Journals, Inc.

<sup>11</sup>SPAUSA.

<sup>12</sup>"Beset By Opportunities", [www.Skateboarding.com](http://www.Skateboarding.com), 8/10/99.

<sup>13</sup>Sports Edge Magazine, 11/01.

<sup>14</sup>[www.Skateboarding.com](http://www.Skateboarding.com).

<sup>15</sup>SPAUSA.

<sup>16</sup>SPAUSA.

<sup>17</sup>IASC.

<sup>18</sup>IASC.

<sup>19</sup>National Sporting Goods Association.

<sup>20</sup>National Sporting Goods Association.

<sup>21</sup>SPAUSA.

<sup>22</sup>"Advertising Age", 3/21/02.

<sup>23</sup>"Advertising Age", 3/21/02.

<sup>24</sup>"Advertising Age", 3/21/02.

<sup>25</sup>"Advertising Age", 3/21/02.

<sup>26</sup>[www.Skateboarding.com](http://www.Skateboarding.com).

## SPORTS INJURY DATA

- **U.S. Injuries Statistics 2000**  
(injuries per participant)

- Number of reported emergency room injuries for skateboarders is less than most traditional sports activities:

Activity	Injury Ratio	Total # of Injuries*	Total # of Participants**
Hockey	.027	73,636	2,761,000
Football	.022	399,501	18,285,000
Baseball	.018	308,931	16,881,000
Basketball	.016	600,256	37,552,000
Bicycles (all)	.011	627,164	56,983,000
Soccer	.010	185,064	17,734,000
<b>Skateboarding</b>	<b>.007</b>	<b>86,781</b>	<b>11,649,000</b>
Skating (ice, inline)	.005	181,958	39,858,000
Scooters (manual)	.003	42,505	13,881,000
Volleyball	.003	64,527	22,876,000

\*National Electronic Injury Surveillance System, a program of the National Consumer Product Safety Commission ([www.cpsc.com](http://www.cpsc.com)).

\*\*American Sports Data, Inc. ([www.americansportsdata.com](http://www.americansportsdata.com)).

- In the "US Consumer Product Safety Commission January 1998 report";
  - Three to four children die each year in baseball, softball and tee-ball. Most of the children's deaths resulted from impact by baseballs.
  - In-line skating: 25 deaths during January 1992 to June 1995, 80% involved motor vehicles.
  - Bicycling: about 100 deaths annually, 90% involved motor vehicles.
  - Three skateboard-related deaths since 1980, all from motor vehicles.
- Safe facilities are needed to get kids off the streets. Skate parks with smooth surfaces and protective headgear have a low injury rate.

Source: International Association of Skateboard Companies (IASC).

## HOW TO DONATE TO THE PROJECT

### RECOGNITION LEVELS

*All donors will be recognized in publicity on the project and at the official skate plaza grand opening.*

**\$100** 4" x 8" Brick with engraved name(s)

**\$500** 12" x 12" Diamond shape engraved stone, engraved brick

**\$5000** Park bench or other park amenity engraved with name(s).

Engraving: Maximum of 13 characters on each of three lines, including spaces. (Example: "In memory of..." or "In honor of...")

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For donations over \$500, payment plans can be arranged.  
Multiple donations welcomed.

Mail donations to:

Community Parks Association  
1300 First Avenue  
Eau Claire WI 54703  
Make checks payable to:  
Community Parks Association  
Note: Skate Plaza Project

The Community Parks Association is a 501 (c) 3, tax-deductible organization.  
For additional information, contact the Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department at 839-5032.

- ☐ Please check here if you would **not** like your name to be mentioned in newspaper or other media releases, on the progress of this project.

## **SKATE PLAZA COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Anthony Loughan, Owner  
Underload Skate Shop

Phil Fieber, Director  
Eau Claire Parks, Recreation and Forestry

